

FACT SHEET ON PROPOSED SEPTIC SYSTEM REGULATIONS

On February 23, the State Water Resources Control Board (Water Board) closed the public comment period for draft regulations regarding onsite wastewater treatment systems (septic systems). During the comment period (Nov. 7, 2008 to Feb. 23, 2009), the Water Board received more than 2,500 e-mail comments and hundreds of comment letters, and recorded many hours of oral comments from 12 public workshops held throughout the state.

Following is an update on what happens now in terms of the Water Board developing regulations for septic systems:

Is it likely that the next version of proposed regulations will be different from the current version?

Yes. Water Board Staff will be recommending substantial changes based on all of the input from the public.

What happens next, now that the current comment period is over and workshops are concluded?

The Water Board is compiling all of the many comments (transcribing all oral testimony and electronically scanning all comment letters) received from the public. Water Board staff expects to have this information available to the public in April.

How will the Water Board proceed from here?

Water Board staff will draft revised regulations based on the public comments received, will work with the agencies and groups identified in the enabling legislation (AB 885), and when a new set of draft regulations is written, will notice another public comment period so that all stakeholders have a chance to provide input.

Depending on the extent of the recommended revisions to the proposed regulations, staff will also need to modify or redraft the environmental impact report.

What is the anticipated new timeline and when will the public be notified of the revised proposal?

Redrafting these regulations to respond to the substantial comments received is a high priority for the Board. Board staff will be working with the agencies and groups identified in the enabling legislation (AB 885) to develop a new conceptual regulatory proposal within the next 3-5 months. The extent of revisions to the new regulatory proposal will be an important factor in how long it takes to modify or redraft the environmental impact report. Staff is hopeful that this work can be accomplished within 12 months.

How will changes be communicated?

After Water Board staff has prepared a response to public comments and completed changes to the draft regulations, waiver, and EIR, a new public comment period will be scheduled and posted on this web site. Interested parties, including all those who

commented on the previous draft and provided staff with contact information, will be notified by U.S. mail and e-mail.

Will there be more opportunities to comment?

Yes. Significant changes will be made to the regulations and a new public comment period will be necessary to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the revised proposed regulations. The time and date for public comments will be posted on the Water Board web site and publicized statewide.